

CHAPTER TIVE

SAHIB

"It is not enough that we confer on the natives the benefits of just laws and of moderate taxation, unless we endeavour to raise their character; but under a foreign government there are so many causes that tend to depress it that it is not easy to prevent it from sinking. It is an old saying that he who loses his liberty loses half his virtue. That is true of nations as well as individuals. To have no property scarcely degrades more in one case, than in the other to have property at the disposal of a foreign government in which we have no share. The enslaved nation loses the privileges of a nation as the slave does those of a freeman: it loses the privileges of taxing itself, of making its own laws, of having any share in their administration or in the internal government of the country. . . . It is not even the arbitrary power of a national sovereign, but the subjection to a foreign one, that destroys national character and extinguishes national spirit. . . . It would be more desirable that we should be expelled from the country altogether than that the result of our system of government should be such an abasement of a whole people" From a Minute by SIR THOMAS MUNRO, December 3 ist, 1824

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THIS EARLY BRITISH ADMINISTRATOR loved India passionately, and lie is still commemorated, I am told, in some parts of Madras Presidency in songs and ballads. In the quotation given there could not be more clearly expressed the justification for Indian nationalism. It reminds us of the strange contradiction in the English people, which may result from their mixed blood—the Celt warring with the Saxon in every British breast!

We can see a twofold strand in the history of British colonial expansion, each strand contradicting the other. There is the liberal tradition, often but not always animated by a pure religious feeling, enshrined in some of the poetry